

All but the second were purchased from various stands on Virginia Ave., N. W., between 9th and 10th Sts., and were found on careful inquiry to have been killed by gunners at points between Washington and Alexandria. The second was killed by a gunner, who gave the bird to George Ayers of Alexandria, Va., who sent it to the Smithsonian Institution, where it now forms No. 154200 of the U. S. N. M. Collection. It was said to have been the only one seen. Nos. 3, 4, and 6 form Nos. 2284, 2286 and 2289 of my collection, and the 5th is in the collection of Mr. William Palmer of this place. — PAUL BARTSCH, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.*

**Note on *Pagophila alba*.** — The attempt made (Pr. U. S. Nat. Mus. V, June, 1882, p. 39) to supersede the established generic name *Pagophila* by the derelict term "*Gavia*" has been temporarily effectual through the adoption of *Gavia* by the A. O. U. on the strength of Dr. Stejneger's misrepresentation, but is not likely to prove more successful than some other blunders that could be named. *Gavia* is traceable back to Pliny, as equivalent to Greek *λάρος*, Lat. *larus*, a gull; and is said to be still an Italian word for 'gull.' Passing by its use by Moehring in 1752 as equivalent to *Larus*, and its employ by Brisson in 1760 as a term in the polynomial designations of various Gulls—for these instances do not affect the nomenclatural point I raise—we come to *Gavia*, Forster, *Enchirid. Nat. Hist.* 1788, p. 38. This is said by Newton (Dict., p. 310) to be a genus of water birds, with no type named; but according to this high authority, Forster's "diagnosis indicates that he meant what is most commonly called *Colymbus*." There are various other later applications of *Gavia* as a generic name of certain Gulls and Plovers, notably one by Boie, *Isis*, 1822, p. 563, to a genus containing *Larus eburneus* and *L. rissa*; but Boie's employ of *Gavia* in this connection is voided by our rules in consequence of Forster's prior use of *Gavia* for a genus of Divers. Waiving other objections to *Gavia* which Mr. Howard Saunders has indicated (*Cat. B. Brit. Mus.* XXV, 1896, p. 301) and Professor Newton has specified (*l. c.*), we see that Forster's *Gavia*, 1788, debars Boie's *Gavia*, 1822. *Pagophila* Kaup, 1829, is thus in order as the tenable generic name of the Ivory Gull, *P. alba*. It is to be hoped that the next edition of the Check-List will correct the error into which the A. O. U. has been misled by relying upon unreliable evidence. — ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

**Arrival of Terns at Penikese Island in 1897.** — Penikese Island, May 6, 1897. Up to last night no Terns had been noted in this locality. Early this morning they appeared in quite a considerable body. They all departed the next day, returning in a day or two; their numbers being greatly augmented. The first egg was observed on the afternoon of May 23. No more were discovered until the 25th, when four were noted. On May 29, 30, 31, quite a number of nests with one egg each, several with

two eggs each, and four with three eggs each were observed. The above is the earliest date of arrival of the birds of which I have any knowledge. This island has now been posted, and the Terns are likely to have better protection than ever before. — GEORGE H. MACKAY, *Nantucket, Mass.*

*Onychoprion*, not *Haliplana*. — As I have remarked before (Pr. Philada. Acad., 1862, p. 555), "Wagler's *Onychoprion* is based upon the *S[terna]*, *serrata* of Forster; while his *Haliplana* has as type *S. fuliginosa*, Gm. The former of these species . . . is in all probability identical with *fuliginosa*, and is at all events strictly congeneric with it. This being the case, perhaps *Onychoprion* ought to be employed for the genus; as it is instituted several pages in advance of *Haliplana*" in *Isis*, 1832. I now find the case to be exactly as I surmised 35 years ago. The synonymy of the Sooty Tern section of *Sterna*, so far as Wagler is concerned, is: *Onychoprion*, *Isis*, 1832, p. 277, type *serrata* Forst., = *fuliginosa*; *Planetis*, *Isis*, 1832, p. 1222, type *guttata* Forst., = *fuliginosa*; *Haliplana*, *Isis*, 1832, p. 1224, type *fuliginosa*. All three names are thus based on one species, and all bear the same ostensible date; but of actual priority of *Onychoprion* there is no question, as reference to the dates of parts of *Isis* for 1832 shows.

The specific name of another bird of the subgenus *Onychoprion* must be changed from the misspelling "*anæthetus*" of our Check-List, for we have absurdly adopted a mere misprint, besides failing to observe grammatical gender. Our rules allow us the privilege of correcting a typographical error, as dropping of the *s* in this case certainly is; and though *Sterna* was once of common gender, it is feminine now, both by analogy of form and by common consent. The full form of the word would be *anæsthetica*, as in my 'Key,' etc.; but lest I be accused of wanton 'purism,' I will compound that felony by accepting *anæstheta*, (Gr. ἀναισθητός, stolid, unfeeling, apathetic).

Our mistake regarding *Onychoprion* is counterbalanced by a reverse error. Having ignored actual priority in this case, we turn around and bestow a fictitious priority upon *Sterna tschegrava* Lepechin, to avoid using the established name *S. caspia*. These two names are ostensibly of same date, 1770, in same part of same volume of the publication in which they both appear; and there is no evidence that the 82 pages concerned (p. 500 to p. 582) make a difference of a day or an hour in actual date of publication. Why then drop *caspia* for *tschegrava*, except to show how great we can be in little things? I shall continue to use *caspia*; and so will all other ornithologists, when the flurry and hurry and worry of our Check-List is over. — ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

**Remarks on certain Procellariidæ.** — On reviewing these objects of my early solicitude (1864-66), chiefly in the light of Salvin's recent admirable Monograph, I observe that a number of classificatory and nomenclatural changes are required in the A. O. U. List, besides those which the Committee adopted in 'The Auk' of last January, or then deferred.